

SPRING 2021

FOCUS ON

PRESERVATION



*MAY IS
PRESERVATION
MONTH*

ROANOKE VALLEY PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

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Please send submissions for the RVPF Newsletter
to Whitney Leeson, wleeson@roanoke.edu.



Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

"Preservation is simply having the good sense to hold on to things that are well designed, that link us with our past in a meaningful way, and that have plenty of good use left in them."

Richard Moe

Led the National Trust for Historic Preservation from 1993-2009

May is Preservation Month

Promoting Historic Places and Heritage Tourism

Every year in May, the RVPF along with other preservation-minded organizations across the country celebrate Preservation Month. The tradition began in 1973 as National Preservation Week and in 2005, the National Trust extended the celebration to the entire month of May.

Preservation events sponsored by the RVPF provide an opportunity to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of historic preservation and to celebrate the diverse and unique heritage of Roanoke and southwestern Virginia.

History

The first National Preservation Week was celebrated on May 6-12, 1973. A Joint Congressional Resolution was introduced on February 15, 1973, by Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), chairman of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee to designate the week of May 6-12, 1973, as National Preservation Week. President Richard Nixon signed the resolution into law on May 5, 1973.

First Lady Patricia Nixon, who presented the National Trust awards during the third annual Awards Luncheon on May 8th, also read the Presidential proclamation:

"As the pace of change accelerates in the world around us, Americans more than ever need a lively awareness of our roots and origins in the past on which to base our sense of identity in the present and our directions for the future."

<https://savingplaces.org/stories/history-of-preservation-month#>.

Monterey Smokehouse Tour

Saving an Old Building

Southwest Restoration, headed by Ariel Clark, former Foundation board member, is stabilizing an 1800s smokehouse in the back yard of Monterey, the 1845 home of George and the late Louise Kegley in northeast Roanoke. Termites have damaged the old building but Clark is saving the framework.

In the 1889 picture of four generations of servants (a great-grandmother was out sick), the small building at right was part of the smokehouse. The main building shown here and others in the background have been lost to history. No one knows when these outbuildings were constructed. This building was identified as a smokehouse after hooks used to hold hams were seen at the top. It has been used for storage.

Ariel Clark inherited the company from her father, Mark Clark, who has retired after restoring many old buildings in the Roanoke Valley and the surrounding region.

George Kegley and Ariel Clark invite any interested preservationist to come out to Monterey and hear her description of the work of salvaging and stabilizing wood damaged by termites.

Tours of the smokehouse will take place on Saturday May 8 from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Please wear a mask.

To reach Monterey, go out Hollins Road to Old Mountain Road and come in through Monterey golf course.



Photo Credit: George Kegley

George Kegley

Fire Station No. 7

HISTORY

The original Fire Station No.7 stood on this site for almost 100 years. The property was platted initially as two residential lots in Virginia Heights. Built in 1922, it was one of eight stations erected between 1909 and 1929. The construction represented the prosperity of the expanding city and the development of the Greater Raleigh Court Neighborhood. The station was included within the Grandin Road Commercial Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURE

Architects Edward Frye and Frank Stone designed the 1922 station, which evoked the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles. Fire Station No. 7 was scaled to blend into the residential neighborhood in response to public concerns that firehouses be compatible architecturally with neighboring houses. When the station opened, *The Roanoke Times* praised its modernity and compared it to a "beautiful residence." The new building incorporates many features from the original building, including brick and cast-concrete elements, brass fire poles, and locker doors.



FIRE STATION NO. 7



*Davis photograph, ca. 1922, front elevation, upon completion
(Virginia Room, Main Library, Roanoke, VA)*

SERVICE

Fire Station No. 7 has always been important to the community - architecturally, as the gateway; protectively, as an active fire station; and civically, as part of community tradition. To better serve the growing community, a new station with updated accommodations and equipment replaced the original station on this site in 2021.

With the extension of the streetcar in 1911, land companies developed lots south of the Roanoke River. In the 1920s, Virginia Heights, Raleigh Court, Wasena, and Norwich boomed as residential suburbs. Virginia Avenue (Memorial) and Grandin Road served as thoroughfares with Memorial Bridge connecting to downtown. Construction of Virginia Heights Elementary School (1922) and Raleigh Court Library (1931) followed the fire station.

As the automobile eclipsed the streetcar in the 1940s, transportation patterns changed. Growth of the suburbs demanded more fire services and circa 1950, a second equipment bay was constructed. Fire stations often provided additional general services to the community. Until the 1960s, Fire Station No. 7 sold ice cream, candy, and bread.



*Photograph ca. 1922, south elevation, where the bay was added in the 1950s
(Virginia Room, Main Library, Roanoke, VA)*



*Photograph ca. 1922, looking northwest
(Virginia Room, Main Library, Roanoke, VA)*



*1970s view of the 1922 fire station and 1950s bay addition. The station was equipped with a 1950 ladder truck and a 1969 Oren engine fire truck
(Historical Society of Western Virginia)*

Unveiling of New Interpretive Marker for Fire Station No. 7

Our Tours and Interpretive Panels Committee completed the graphics for an interpretive sign about the history of Fire Station No. 7 in the Grandin Road Commercial Historic District. The sign is sponsored by Roanoke City and the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation.

The Gropen, Inc. sign company of Charlottesville has finished production and installation of the 24" x 36" sign at Fire Station No. 7.

Join us later in May for the unveiling at the front entrance of Fire Station No. 7, 1742 Memorial Avenue SW, Roanoke, VA. Date and time of unveiling will be posted on our RVPF website and facebook page.

Preston Place

PRESTON PLACE

Preston Place is the oldest home in Salem and one of the earliest in the Roanoke Valley. The Salem Museum and Historical Society renovated and reopened the home in 2017, so that Preston Place will continue to stand as a witness to history and a way of life long gone.

WHO LIVED HERE

John Cole, a local blacksmith, built a cabin on this site in the 1790s. He opened his home to travelers passing through Salem along the Great Road that ran from Pennsylvania to Tennessee. His guests included Davy Crockett and Louis Philippe, future king of France.

In 1820, Cole sold the property to John Johnston who built this home. Johnston reused materials from Cole's cabin, including the exposed beams that can be seen throughout the structure. The Johnston family lived here until 1879 when Charles Isaac Preston, for whom the house is named, bought the property for \$600.

Preston was a farmer, a Confederate war veteran, and town sheriff of Salem. After his death, the property was passed down through the family to Dr. Esther Clark Brown, the first female physician of Salem. She realized the importance of the home and, after her death in 2010, Dr. Brown's family donated the property to the Salem Museum and Historical Society. The Salem Museum and Historical Society is grateful to the City of Salem and the donors, volunteers, and workers who made the renovation of Preston Place possible.



CHARLES ISAAC PRESTON

DR. ESTHER CLARK BROWN

ABOUT THE HOUSE

The home Johnston built in 1821 had two rooms below and two above. The early Federal-style house features Flemish-bond brickwork, gauged brick jack arches, and a corbelled brick cornice. A one-and-a-half story rear brick ell and indoor kitchen were added in the mid-1800s and enlarged in 1946. A well still exists in the backyard by the massive Osage Orange tree, but other outbuildings, including a kitchen, smokehouse, and corn crib, were lost over time. Preston Place is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.



Preston Place, ca. 1946 Photo provided by Salem Museum and Historical Society



The home is constructed using Flemish-bond brickwork. Numerous glazed or heat-discolored headers (ends of brick) alternate with stretchers (sides of brick) to create a decorative surface that is quite rare among surviving buildings in the area post 1830.



The first-floor windows have gauged jack arches. The bricks are arranged so the joints radiate outward from a common center. The second-floor windows are overtied by a course of sailor bricks laid on their long faces with only an end exposed.



The decorative brick cornice below the roof overhang consists of three corbelled courses of bricks with the middle course angled to form a sawtooth pattern. It is now painted white.



Unveiling of New Interpretive Marker for Preston Place

Our Tours and Interpretive Panels Committee completed the graphics for an interpretive sign about the history of Preston Place in Salem. The sign is sponsored by Salem Museum and Historical Society and the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation.

The Gropen, Inc. sign company of Charlottesville has finished production of the 24" x 36 " sign and Salem City will install it at Preston Place in June.

Join us later in May for the unveiling at Salem Museum in the Williams-Brown House, 801 East Main Street, Salem, VA. Date and time of unveiling will be posted on our RVPF website and facebook page.

Persinger Cemetery

PERSINGER CEMETERY II

Great Wagon Road Settlers

The Persinger Family like many other German immigrants in the early 1800s traveled the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania to settle on the site of the future City of Roanoke. Patriarch John Persinger (Perdschinger), along with his three sons, Jacob, William, and James, and nearly two dozen enslaved people, grew corn, wheat, and tobacco, raised cattle and hogs. They erected substantial brick houses. Around 1821, they also built a commercial mill nearby on the Roanoke River, which would eventually supply meal and flour to customers as far away as Richmond. Although the Persingers sold the mill in 1836, Englishman James T. Hickey and family continued to operate it and lived close by in a hewn log house.

Evolution of Persinger Lands and the Area

The combined land holdings of the Persinger Family comprised parts of the current neighborhoods of Norwich, Greater Raleigh Court, Greater Deyerle, and Grandin Court.

William lived in a ca. 1825 brick house less than a quarter mile to the northwest on the river. In 1858, James built a substantial brick home, *White Corners*, which still stands today on Persinger Road.

By the late 1890s, the area was becoming industrialized, and as transportation improvements opened new opportunities for growth in the early 1900s, land developers purchased the remainder of the Persinger landholdings. By the 1950s, their former pastures and fields gave way to the established neighborhoods that exist today.

Persinger Cemetery II

The first Persinger Cemetery was located near Brandon Avenue and no longer exists. Persinger Cemetery II was overgrown and obscured from view until 1969 when neighbors took it under their care and researched the cemetery. Persinger descendants joined the preservation efforts with neighbors to maintain the family cemetery.

Buried here are William Persinger, his wife Ester Pickering Persinger, two of their eight children (William Jr. and Adolphus) who died as Confederate soldiers, a 29-year-old granddaughter (Mary Hester Richardson), and an infant boy (William Fayette Persinger).



The ca. 1825 William Persinger House from the 1959 *Roanoke Times & World News* article written by Raymond P. Barnes. Note the vacant condition of the house. The house overlooked the Roanoke River. It was demolished in 1963 for an industrial office complex.



1864 CSA map of Roanoke County, VA, southern section (Library of Congress). William Persinger's house is denoted as 'Wm Persinger' and their former mill is denoted as 'Bolins Mill', most likely the owner then. William (1801-1876) was still living in the house at that time but sold the mill in 1836. Note the Roanoke River and Peter's Creek flowing into it from the northwest. The road at the upper right is the Salem to Lynchburg Turnpike.



Unveiling of New Interpretive Marker for Persinger Cemetery

Our Tours and Interpretive Panels Committee completed the graphics for an interpretive sign about the history of Persinger Cemetery in Salem. The sign is sponsored by Roanoke Committee of the Colonial Dames of America and the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation.

The Gropen, Inc. sign company of Charlottesville has finished production of the 24" x 24 " sign and will do the installation by t by early summer.

Join us in early June for the unveiling at Persinger Cemetery #2 at the intersection of Memorial Avenue & Edgewood Street SW, Roanoke, VA. Date and time of unveiling will be posted on our RVPF website and facebook page.

2021 Endangered Sites

In addition to annual preservation awards, RVPF announces an Endangered Sites list every year in May to mark Preservation Month. These historic places are important to the social and cultural fabric of the Roanoke Valley. There have been some success stories and many times the awards recipients feature places that were previously endangered. The goal of the annual list is to bring greater public attention to places that matter and encourage the public to become involved in advocating for historic preservation.

Calvary Baptist Church 608 Campbell Avenue, SW

In 1890 Roanoke had a population of 16,000 and only one Baptist Church. Mr. E. H. Stewart, furniture dealer and Baptist layman, felt that Roanoke needed a second church.

Thirty-four members met in the YMCA for a time until a church could be built. The first church was a small frame tabernacle between 5th and 6th Street on Campbell Avenue.

By 1914 the membership had increased and the building's capacity was far too limited. It was decided to build and the present lot was purchased. The ground-breaking took place in 1924 and the building was completed the next year. The building is a Greek-temple-form church. It is perhaps the most noteworthy work of classical-style religious architecture in the City of Roanoke.

Trends have changed and many congregations have had to make adjustments. The current members of Calvary Baptist meet on Sunday afternoons at Colonial Baptist Church on Colonial Avenue.

Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

Judy Harrison



Roanoke Times

201 Campbell Avenue, SW

The *Roanoke Times* home office building for 107 years has been offered for sale by its owner, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Inc., the former publisher of the newspaper. The building at 201 Campbell Ave., SW, is a pillar of the Roanoke's downtown business center, across the street from Roanoke's Municipal Building.

Valued at \$6.07 million by a real estate firm, the three-story building has 121,319 square feet of space on 2.5 acres of two full city blocks. Much of its space is unused or under-used since the printing operation was moved to Lynchburg several years ago. The current owner, Lee Enterprises, said a decision has not been made whether to remain in the building as a tenant or to seek other space. Berkshire Hathaway also is selling its other newspaper buildings in the state.

Founded in 1886, the newspaper was bought by J.B. Fishburn in 1913 and his family operated the morning *Times* and afternoon *World-News* until



Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

the company was sold to Landmark Communications in Norfolk in 1969. Landmark sold it to a publicly traded company in 2013 and Lea Enterprises bought it in 2020.

The future of the building is uncertain because growing interest in digital communication and competition from other media have reduced newspapers' circulation and threatened their future. As its circulation dropped, the *Times* abolished many jobs and cut expenses. Reporters are working from home during the pandemic.

George Kegley





McClanahan Cemetery

608 Campbell Avenue, SW

McClanahan Cemetery is neglected

The grave sites of Col. Elijah McClanahan, his wife, Agnes Strothe Lewis and nine other family members have been neglected in a hilltop cemetery off 24th Street, NW.

About 25 years ago, the small cemetery was restored through the efforts of a Historical Society of Western Virginia committee. The site is endangered at present.

The cemetery's owner, Habitat for Humanity, is offering to donate the lot to the Foundation or any organization that will take care of it.

Years ago, a Boy Scout did some work and a crew of inmates from Roanoke City jail mowed the grass and cleaned the cemetery. The inmates (trusties) are not working outside now because of the dangers of the pandemic. But when dangers have passed and normal operations resume, Sheriff David Bell said the cemetery mowing can begin again.

McClanahan, 1770-1857, owned a large portion of present northwest Roanoke. A lieutenant colonel in the War of 1812, he married Agnes Strother Lewis, daughter of Col. Andrew Lewis Jr. of Bent Mountain and granddaughter of General Andrew Lewis of Salem.

A study by Radford University archeology students found 11 grave sites there but only three were marked.

George Kegley



Photo Credit: Bob Clement

Botetourt County Historical Society and Museum

3 West Main Street, Fincastle

Since opening its doors officially for the first time at 1:00pm on Sunday, November 27, 1966, the Botetourt County Historical Society & Museum has served as a repository for hundreds of artifacts that have helped to interpret the history of Botetourt County for thousands of visitors. Located directly behind the Botetourt County Courthouse, the museum is housed in a building that dates back to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Starting out as a one-room law office as early as 1791, the building has seen many additions and changes over the years, having become part of the Western hotel in the 1850s and having been used as apartments by Dodd and Dodd beginning in the 1930s. One of the charter Board members of the society, Katherine Harris, resided in the building at one time.

Botetourt County acquired the building in 1961 and has allowed the Botetourt County Historical Society, Inc. to utilize the structure continuously since 1966 to house its historical museum. The future of the former Western Hotel building is uncertain. Currently, there are plans to renovate and expand the courthouse which are in direct competition with the space occupied by the museum. Museum staff and Board members, along with local residents are working closely with Botetourt County to ensure every effort is taken to preserve the building during the renovation period.

Lynsey Allie

A Touch of History by Weldon Martin



Photo Credit: Lynsey Allie

Catawba Hospital, Catawba

The Catawba Mental Hospital in Roanoke County is planning to demolish the last remaining building of the 1858 Red Sulfur Springs Resort as well as several buildings associated with the historic hospital. The buildings are located within the Catawba Hospital Historic District, which was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1989; however, the property has never been formally listed on either the state or national register.

The Catawba Hospital property, located in the Catawba Valley in northern Roanoke County, contains a ca. 1858 cottage and gazebo associated with the Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs resort as well as buildings dating from the early to mid-20th century associated with the development of the hospital. The property was first recognized for the healing attributes of the Sulphur and limestone springs in 1857 by several businessmen from nearby Salem and the Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs Resort opened in June 1858. Later owned by Joe Chapman, the resort grew in popularity during the second half of the 19th century with the main hotel accommodating as many as 300 guests. The 700-acre resort attracted visitors, including many tuberculosis patients, who sought the clean air of Catawba Mountain in addition to the healing waters of the springs. In 1908, the state purchased the resort from the Chapman family to establish the Catawba Sanitorium as the first public tuberculosis sanitorium in Virginia. The property operated in this capacity until the 1970s when it became Catawba Mental Hospital.

The buildings proposed for demolition include: the ca. 1858 two-story frame hotel associated with the antebellum resort; a 1924 brick house known as the Medical Director's Residence; the 1932 nurses' dormitory known as the Garst Building; and two 1950s houses clad in asbestos shingles. A ca. 1910 frame house, which is not included within the eligible Catawba Hospital Historic District, will also be demolished. These buildings, which appear to have stood vacant for a number of years, are in a deteriorated state due to water damage from leaking roofs as well as fire damage. In several cases, sections of the exterior walls are missing, the porch or roof has collapsed, and the buildings are no longer structurally stable. Additionally, the presence of hazardous materials, including asbestos and lead paint, have made the buildings difficult to utilize and maintain according to the owner.

The RVPF recognizes the challenges state agencies face in preserving historic buildings when their primary mission is not historic preservation and they have limited budgets. However, the Commonwealth of Virginia owns many of our most historic resources and should set an example by being better stewards of our shared heritage. We call attention to the proposed demolitions at Catawba Mental Hospital to advocate for a long-range preservation plan and funding by the state which would integrate preservation with ongoing utilization and maintenance of our historic resources by state agencies.

Alison Blanton



Photo Credit: Mike Pulice

Buena Vista

Penmar Avenue and 9th Street

This Greek Revival style house and the land that it stands on represents the early history of Roanoke prior to the coming of the N&W Railway and the establishment of the city. Built ca. 1850 by George Plater Tayloe, the property originally comprised 598 acres that extended to the Roanoke River.

George P. Tayloe moved here from Mount Airy, the Tayloe plantation in Richmond County in 1830 to manage his family's large land holdings and two iron mines in Cloverdale and Catawba. After marrying Mary Elizabeth Langhorne, Tayloe acquired the property, formerly known as "Roanoke" from Mary's father William in 1833. Tayloe replaced an earlier house on the property with the Greek Revival plantation house known as Buena Vista; a good example of the Greek-Revival style in Western Virginia. The house, thought to have been built by the well-known local builder Benjamin Deyerle, is characterized by its simple block form, low-pitch hipped roof, high-quality brickwork with stretcher-bond façade, Doric pilasters and entablature, and 2-story Doric entrance portico.

Tayloe was an early philanthropist and financially helped establish both Hollins College and St. John's Episcopal Church. In 1890, he sold most of the property to the Buena Vista Land Company to develop a residential neighborhood for the growing city. After Tayloe's death in 1897, Buena Vista stayed in the family until 1937, when the house and the remaining 20-acre tract was sold to the City of Roanoke for use as a recreation center and a city park. In 1974, Buena Vista was recognized for its historic and architectural significance as one of the earliest properties in Roanoke to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Referred to as the "Big House" by the neighborhood, Buena Vista was used as a recreation center until 2011, when the city decided to close the center and sell the house and a 3-acre tract for private ownership. A 2003 facility assessment estimated that the building needed \$285,000 (adjusted to \$335,000 in 2011) in repairs and improvements. After an initial contract of sale for \$75,000 to Scott and Ascension Horchler expired, City Council approved a new sales agreement with the Horchlers in November 2011 for \$30,000. The remaining 17-acres continue to be used as Jackson Park (renamed Belmont Park in 2020).





Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

Although the RVPF supported the sale of the property for use as a private residence, since this was its original use, we strongly encouraged the City to place a preservation easement on the property in order to be a good steward of this historically and architecturally significant public property. A preservation easement is the only legal mechanism that allows for the monitoring of private property by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to assure its proper maintenance and long-term preservation. Unfortunately, no preservation easement was placed on the Buena Vista property when City Council approved the sale in November 2011. The deed of sale included the following terms and conditions: 1) the property must be used as a private residence unless zoning permits otherwise; 2) renovations to the property shall conform with Standards appropriate for landmark property listed on the national and state registers; 3) the building can not be demolished or removed without prior approval by the City; 4) the property cannot be subdivided; and, 5) the owners must make improvements of at least \$100,000 to the house within the first year.

Today, the exterior of Buena Vista is in worse condition than when it was sold. It is likely that the \$100,000 in required improvements were made to the interior to convert it back to a private residence; however, significant repairs and maintenance need to be made to the exterior of the house soon. Among other issues, poor water drainage is causing the entablature to separate from the masonry wall, mortar to deteriorate, and the stucco ceiling of the portico to fail. While we believe that the terms and conditions of the deed of sale either have been or are being met, there is no provision to require that the owners properly maintain the building and, if this lack of maintenance continues, Buena Vista will be threatened with "demolition by neglect."

Alison Blanton



The Rudd House

5315 Plantation Road

This home was built in 1885 by William Peter Huff, Sr. The home is described as Carpenter Gothic in one article and a highly decorated Queen Anne with a steeple gable of Gothic Revival roof in another. Over the years it has had numerous names including Rudd House, Windy Hill and Windmere. No history was found on the last two names but it was owned in the 1970's by Walter Rudd. The Department of Historic Resources 2011 report describes it as among the most impressive late Victorian houses in the Roanoke Valley.



The house has not been lived in for 40 years. A modern home was built on the property right behind the historic home where the owners of Rudd House lived. From the DHR report in 2011, it is described as being threatened by neglect, especially water damage and the front porch is collapsing. For years it was used as a storage area for car parts.

Currently the property is on the market.

Judy Harrison



Photo credit: <https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/>



RVPF tours Fire Station No. 7 with Chief Hoback

Creative Reuse of Materials from the Old Fire Station

On February 10, Chief Hoback lead Alison Blanton, Anne Beckett, and Whitney Leeson on a private tour of Fire Station No. 7 prior to its grand opening. As promised, many historical elements from the original 1922 fire station were re-used in the new station, such as brick in some of the interior walls, wood that was made into tables and sliding doors, and window sashes turned into picture frames that enclosed historic photos of the fire station. In the first-floor screening room, the original front of a retired fire truck frames the TV screen, with lights and all.

And in case you were wondering, yes, the dog is back!

Anne Beckett



Photo Credit: Anne Beckett



Alison Blanton Represents RVPF at the Grand Opening of Fire Station No. 7

Preservation-Inspired Design

Alison was one of the key-note speakers at the grand opening of the fire station on February 24, a warm and sunny day. Starting with the mayor's opening remarks, the historical significance of the original 1922 fire station was the predominate theme of the event. The new fire station emulates the old station in its material, shape, and design, just on a broader, bolder scale. Much thought was given to its design, site, and layout, and this resulting state-of-the-art facility should make all Roanokers feel safe and proud.

Anne Beckett

Preservation Virginia: Historic Preservation, Education & Advocacy

Making Virginia's communities and historic places stronger, more vital and economically sustainable through preservation, education and advocacy.

Preservation Virginia, the statewide historic preservation advocacy organization, will be announcing its 2021 Most Endangered Historic Places list on May 11th. They will also be hosting a free webinar on May 20th from 12:00 pm to 1:15 pm to discuss this year's list, and review the Endangered Places Program since its beginning in 2000. Also participating will be some of this year's nominators sharing why the sites they nominated are important, how they are threatened, and potential solutions to the threats. Kendra Parzen from the National Trust for Historic Preservation will also be participating to discuss the impact of NTHP's annual list of Eleven Most Endangered Places across the nation.

Check out Preservation Virginia's website at www.preservationvirginia.org

OR follow them on FB, Instagram or Twitter to learn more about the webinar and this year's list of endangered places.

RVPF Partners with Ride Solutions on Self-Guided Bicycle Tours

Tour Historic Churches by Bicycle

With group rides prohibited due to the pandemic, RIDE Solutions, the region's commuter assistance program, developed several self-guided, themed, bicycle tours featuring everything from local foods to art to history. With sites and historic context from the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation, RIDE Solutions created four tours featuring 38 historic churches: Downtown Roanoke, Northeast Roanoke, Northwest Roanoke (all under ten miles), and a 37-mile Roanoke Valley Loop.

Many churches have a century or more of history with pastors that served for decades and were deeply involved in the community and the Civil Rights movement. Some of the buildings themselves have been the home of more than one church through the years and most congregations have moved a few times responding to changes in the size and locations of their congregations. Segregation and urban renewal impacted Black churches and white churches.

The tour routes bicyclists on greenways, bike lanes, and quiet neighborhood streets. Using the Ride with GPS app, bicyclists can follow the route and read a little about each church listed. A bicycle is an ideal way to explore the churches and experience the neighborhoods surrounding each church: fast enough to make the distance, slow enough to soak it in, and easy enough to stop and look.

Rachel Ruhlen



Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour Brochure

"Test-walking" our updated downtown tour.

Whitney Feldman, Rachel Ruhlen, Whitney Leeson, and Scott Sauls spent two afternoons "test-walking" the routes on our downtown walking tour map. The brochure provides visitors with an overview of Roanoke City's development from its days as Big Lick up to the twenty-first century. It features three unique views of the city: (1) The Commerce Walk, which takes visitors through the heart of the city; (2) the Community Walk, which takes visitors past buildings and landmarks central to the daily lives of Roanoke's citizens; and (3) the N&W Railway/Gainsboro Walk, which lets visitors get in touch with the city's railroad heritage as well as the rich history of Roanoke's Black community. Rachel Ruhlen is creating a map for both the print and digital versions of the brochure.



Consider making a contribution to RVPF to help with the cost of printing an updated version of our popular downtown walking tour brochure. These brochures are placed in **Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge Visitor Information Center** for distribution to the public. They will also be made digitally available on our web site as a walking tour app.

Checks of any amount are most appreciated. Please make checks payable to RVPF, designate for "walking tour," and mail to RVPF, P.O. Box 1366, Roanoke VA 24007.

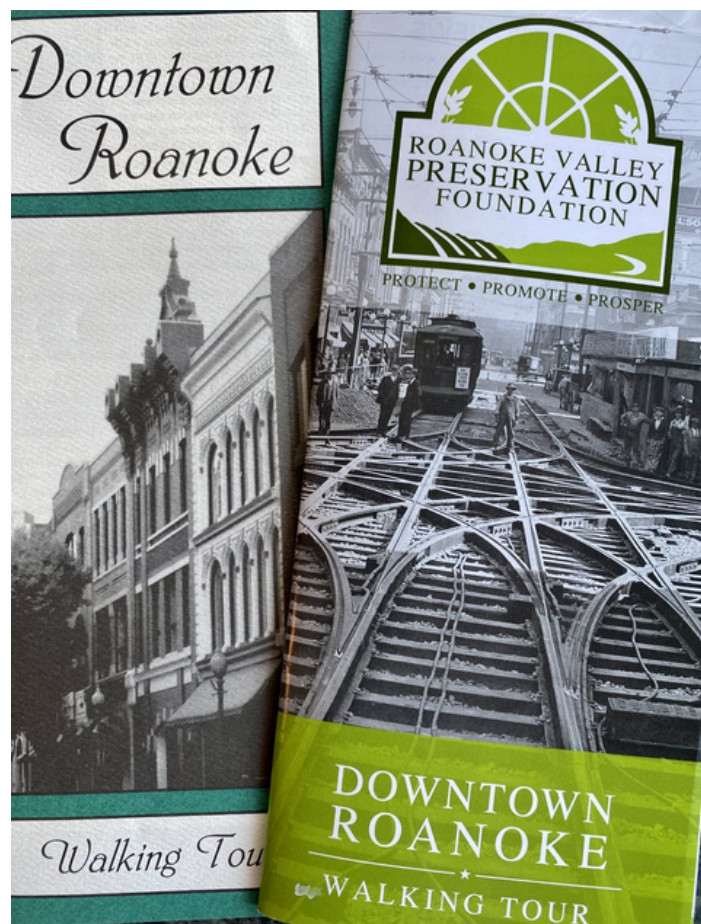


Photo Credit: Whitney Leeson

Isabel Thornton Recognized for Leadership in Historic Preservation

Power in Preservation

Congratulations to Isabel Thornton, former RVPF Board Member, on being selected for the *Power in Preservation* exhibit at the Dumbarton House in Washington D.C. for her instrumental work with Restoration Housing.

Isabel is among ten present-day preservationists featured in the exhibit which celebrates the contributions of women to the field of historic preservation. The exhibit spans 160 years from early efforts to preserve landmark buildings associated with our country's founding to the diverse and inclusive preservation movement of today.

The Dumbarton House is the headquarters of The National Society of the Colonial Dames and a historic house museum promoting an understanding of historic preservation and the early history of our nation. Dumbarton House is open Friday through Sunday each week with the exhibit running through the end of the year. If you can't make the trip, check out the virtual exhibit at dumbartonhouse.org/power-in-preservation/.

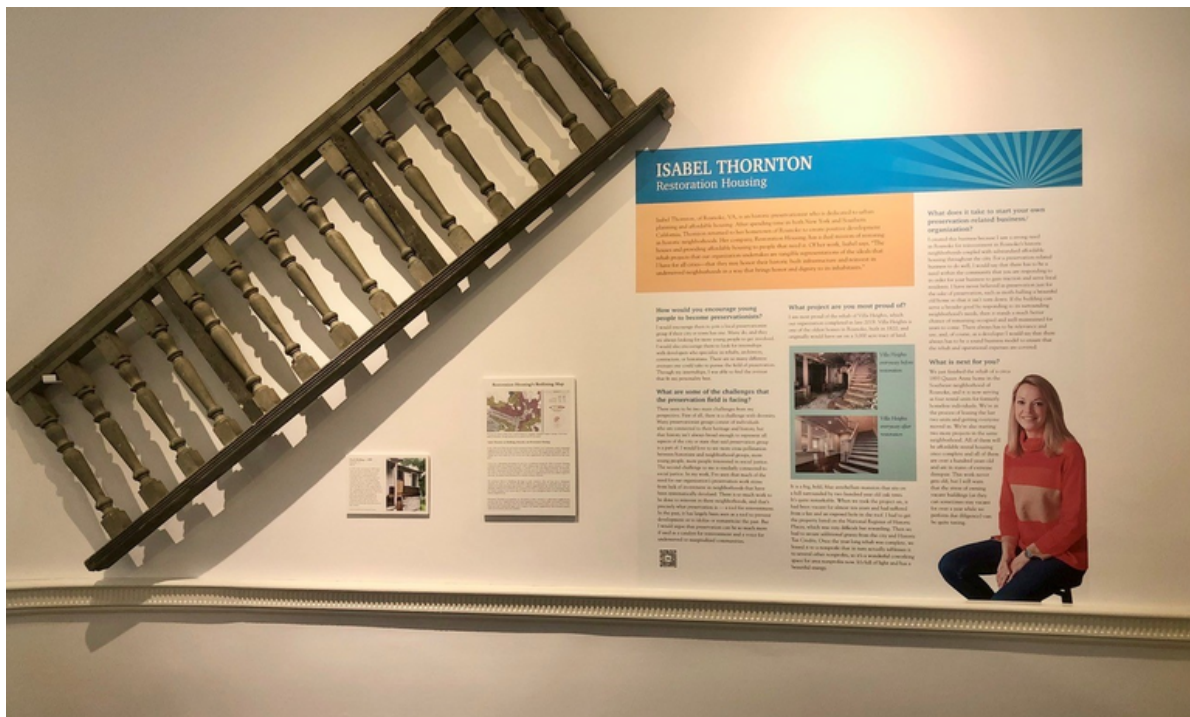


Photo Credit: Restoration Housing, April 2021 Newsletter

Two Recommended Reads from Book Authority

The Newport Experience: Sustaining Historic Preservation into the 21st Century (2020) by **Jeannine Falino**

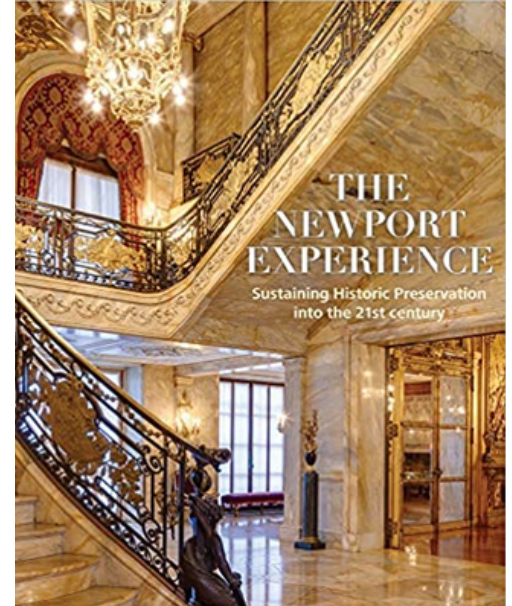
The Preservation Society of Newport County gives more than 1 million tours to visitors from over 100 countries annually, making it one of the most-visited museums in New England. The Society has welcomed 40 million visitors since its founding in 1945. The 88 acres of historic landscapes also comprise an accredited arboretum. The properties are: The Breakers and its Stable & Carriage House, Chateau-sur-Mer, Chepstow, The Elms, Green Animals Topiary Garden, Hunter House, Isaac Bell House, Kingscote, Marble House and Rosecliff. Preserving a historic house is a labor of love.

Preserving nearly a dozen houses, from Colonial-era Georgian to opulent Gilded Age mansions, becomes a mission. In this book, The Preservation Society of Newport County shares its 75 years of experience in conserving three centuries of the finest achievements in American architecture, decorative arts and landscape design. This fully illustrated volume is an essential resource for all heritage, architecture and preservation enthusiasts - as well as anyone enchanted by the unique grandeur of Newport, Rhode Island.

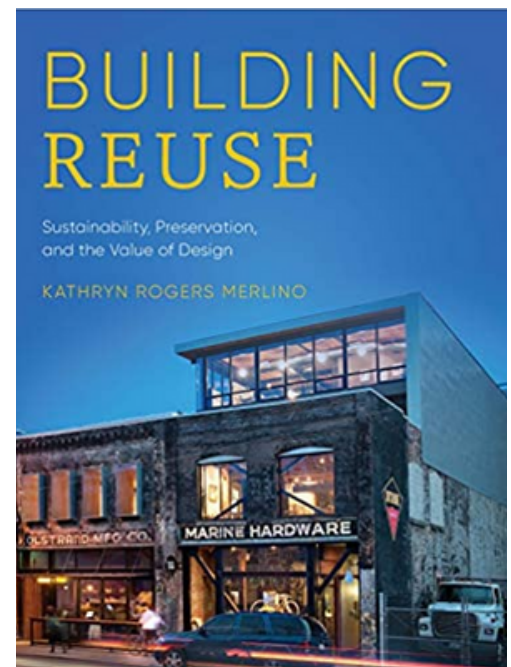
Building Reuse: Sustainability, Preservation, and the Value of Design: Sustainable Design Solutions from the Pacific Northwest (2020) by **Kathryn Rogers Merlino**

The construction and operation of buildings is responsible for 41 percent of all primary energy use and 48 percent of all carbon emissions, and the impact of the demolition and removal of an older building can greatly diminish the advantages of adding green technologies to new construction. In *Building Reuse*, Kathryn Rogers Merlino makes an impassioned case that truly sustainable design requires reusing and reimagining existing buildings.

Additionally, Merlino calls for a more expansive view of preservation that goes beyond keeping only the most distinctive structures based on their historical and cultural significance to embrace the creative reuse of even unremarkable buildings for their environmental value. *Building Reuse* includes a compelling range of case studies--from a private home to an eighteen-story office building--all located in the Pacific Northwest, a region with a long history of sustainable design and urban growth policies that have made reuse projects feasible. Reusing existing buildings can be challenging to accomplish, but changing the way we think about environmentally conscious architecture has the potential to significantly reduce energy consumption, carbon emissions, and waste.



<https://bookauthority.org/books/new-historic-preservation-books>



<https://bookauthority.org/books/new-historic-preservation-books>

Have You Heard About Our Plaque Program?

Bringing "History to the Streets"

Historic homes and buildings in the Roanoke Valley can now be recognized under a Historic Plaque Program administered by RVPF. The program not only brings 'history to the street' for those passing by your home or building, but also brands them as desirable locations for potential home buyers, tenants, and business owners to live, work, and/or invest in. Installing a plaque on your home or building helps others understand its historical significance in our community. Several sites already have plaques including Fire Station No. 1, the Virginia Museum of Transportation (Norfolk & Western Freight Station), the Municipal Building, owners of historic homes, and most recently, Restoration LLC in commemoration of their recent restoration of historic Villa Heights located in NW Roanoke.

Plaques are 10" x 7" cast bronze ovals with brown pebbled backgrounds forged by Paul W. Zimmerman Foundries (responsible for casting most National Register of Historic Places plaques across the country). The cost per plaque is \$350 and includes research for the text to be used on the plaque (the building's historic name, brief description, and construction date), the plaque's production, shipping, regulatory approvals from the city, and installation.

For additional information, visit <http://www.roanokepreservation.org/historic-plaque-program/> or email wleeson@roanoke.edu

"It has been said that, at it's best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future."

William Murtagh

First "keeper" of the National Register of Historic Places



The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation (RVPF) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization established in 1988 to preserve the historic, natural, and cultural resources of the Roanoke Valley (City of Roanoke, City of Salem, Town of Vinton, Roanoke County, Botetourt County, and Franklin County, Virginia). It was founded as - and continues to be - a grassroots, volunteer-driven organization. Since its inception, the RVPF has been active in a variety of preservation efforts. Consistent involvement and advocacy has resulted in increased public awareness and successful preservation projects. Although the Foundation's focus is on the past, its major accomplishments are the result of planning for the future.

"THE FUTURE" OF PRESERVATION

We partner with community groups to bring promote local history - Gainsboro History Walk

We advocate for preservation of important buildings - The Claytor Clinic (currently on the Endangered Sites List)

We give tours of Roanoke to share local history and preservation

We partner with RideSolutions for History By Bike Tours - Vinton Tweed Ride

We install plaques on historic buildings - formerly endangered, Villa Heights has been saved and renovated

We create and install community signs to commemorate and celebrate local history - Evans Mill & Crystal Spring



P.O. Box 1366, Roanoke, VA 24007
www.roanokepreservation.org

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